

BRAND COLOR: Little Miss Sunshine Yellow



I finally made time to see "Little Miss Sunshine" last night and after all the hype I expected to see a movie that played up the color yellow. What I didn't expect to see is how color is masterfully used throughout this film.

The main color palette of yellow/beige, aqua/blue, and red is set early in the movie and this scheme is repeated throughout. Whether in the large colored vases that the sun shines through in the kitchen, the wardrobe of the three main characters, the dinnerware or strategically placed props these colors were combined in many scenes.

Yellow was predominate and some of the more notable uses of this color included:

- Sunny yellow, a color associated with optimism, offered an interesting contrast to the sometimes dark subject matter.
- The yellow beige monotone palette of their Albuquerque residence gives the home's clutter a uniformity that allows it to be there but not to beg for our attention.
- The VW bus surrounds the family with lemon yellow and hints that something positive may be at the end of the journey even for this dysfunctional clan.
- While on the trip bright sunlight exposes each person's flaws but at the same time the warm light asked that we not be too critical of their imperfections.



I also appreciated the use of red which is a color that encourages action and confidence and can also evokes feelings of protection from fears and anxiety. How appropriate that young Olive wore this color throughout as a sign of her determination to overcome her own self doubt and win the "Little Miss Sunshine" contest. I especially liked her red cowgirl boots, red Converse hightops and red necktie.

You may not have noticed but color was used to define all of the characters: Olive mainly in red, her mother and father in aqua/blue and the three other maile family member in black/white/gray. Okay, so maybe you're not as focused on the colors as I am when you watch a move but perhaps if you catch it again on DVD it could be something fun to think about.

One last thing about how color was used with this movie. The poster and marketing materials grabbed our attention with yellow and the color was used to keep our attention on the movie even when it wasn't being directly touted. You may have noticed "Little Miss Sunshine" yellow serving as a backdrop for 'Movie City News' and elsewhere. Being able to recognize a movie or brand simply by seeing this one element speaks to the powerful connections color triggers in our mind.

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